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Jobs for Young Afghans in Herat

An internship program that seeks to recruit young Afghans is making municipal administration more inclusive



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Arezu receives her certificate of participation in the internship program from the mayor of Herat

Graduates aged between 19 and 30 are placed in various municipal departments for six months of on-the-job training

When Arezu Soroori joins Herat municipality's revenue department as a full-time employee, she will represent a new inclusiveness that's changing the way the local administration works. Arezu and one other woman interned in the department as part of a USAID-supported program that seeks to recruit educated, young Afghans, especially women.

Then Arezu's departmental supervisor recommended she be taken on full time because "we need many such bright young employees in this department and this municipality."

Arezu, who sees this as a vindication of her hard work and drive, says such inclusiveness empowers all young Afghans, but especially women.

The internship program places graduates aged between 19 and 30 in various municipal departments for six months of on-the-job training. The opportunity was widely advertised in April 2012 on university campuses, in high schools and private colleges across Herat. It took two months for the successful candidates to start work. Attempts were made to match each intern's skills and interests with the right municipal department – revenue, accounting, administration, archives or green spaces.

Herat's mayor praised the young recruits' contribution. They helped implement new systems of filing and inventory management and computerize record-keeping and the payroll. They also helped develop a modern archive for important municipal documents, created a human resources database and prepared a needs-assessment summary of green space in the city.